

REMARKS

Restriction - Election

The applicant confirms previous telephonic election without traverse of Group II, reading on claims 9-15. Claims 1-8 are withdrawn accordingly.

35 USC § 102(b)

Claims 9-14 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Rudolph (U.S. Pat. No. 4,161,393). The Applicant respectfully disagrees, especially in view of the amendments herein.

As amended, claim 9 expressly requires that syngas from a gasification unit or a partial oxidation unit is split into a first portion and a second portion, and that *only the first portion is combined with steam to form a steam-containing first portion*, which is then fed to the first shift reactor to form a first shift reactor effluent. Moreover, claim 9 also expressly requires that the *second portion is combined with the first shift reactor effluent in an amount effective to reduce steam consumption in the first and second shift reactors*. Viewed from a different perspective, the overall steam input is reduced as only one portion of the syngas receives steam.

In contrast, Rudolph teaches that the entire raw gas stream from the gasification unit or partial oxidation unit is combined with steam in substantial excess over stoichiometric amounts, and that the so produced wet steam is fed at different positions to a chain of reactors. In other words, Rudolph requires over-saturation of raw gas with steam to produce high concentrations of hydrogen to so hydrogenate otherwise detrimental hydrocarbons (see *e.g.*, column 2, lines 3-18). Therefore, Rudolph critically relies on water saturated raw gas, which is contrary to the claimed subject matter. Therefore, the rejection of claims 9-14 as being anticipated by Rudolph should be withdrawn.

35 USC § 103(a)

Claims 11-13 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being obvious over Rudolph in view of Schmid (U.S. Pat. No. 4,159,236). The Applicant again respectfully disagrees.

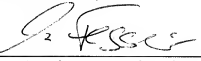
With respect to Rudolph, the same considerations and arguments as discussed above apply and are therefore not reiterated here. Schmid fails to remedy these defects. Indeed, all Schmid provides is the key term 'acid gas removal unit'. Consequently, the rejection of claim 15 as being obvious over Rudolph in view of Schmid should be withdrawn.

REQUEST FOR ALLOWANCE

Claims 1-15 are pending in this application with claims 1-8 being withdrawn. The applicant requests allowance of all pending claims.

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Respectfully submitted,
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